



THE OPPORTUNITY

Why a Conference for Nananom?

The history of Culture and National Development in Ghana written mostly by "foreigners" (both International and local) have relegated to the background the important role that Akom or African Traditional Faith and Religious practices played in the pre-colonial times and continues to play in a post independent Ghana. With so many factors fighting against African traditional spirituality and its practice in Ghana, Akom has come under attack from many angles. This effort is to mobilize our collective efforts to have a United Front, Preserve the Traditions, Create a Progressive Arc for Development and Contributions to Nation Health Delivery and National Affairs as well as To Educate the Public about our continued relevance in today's world.

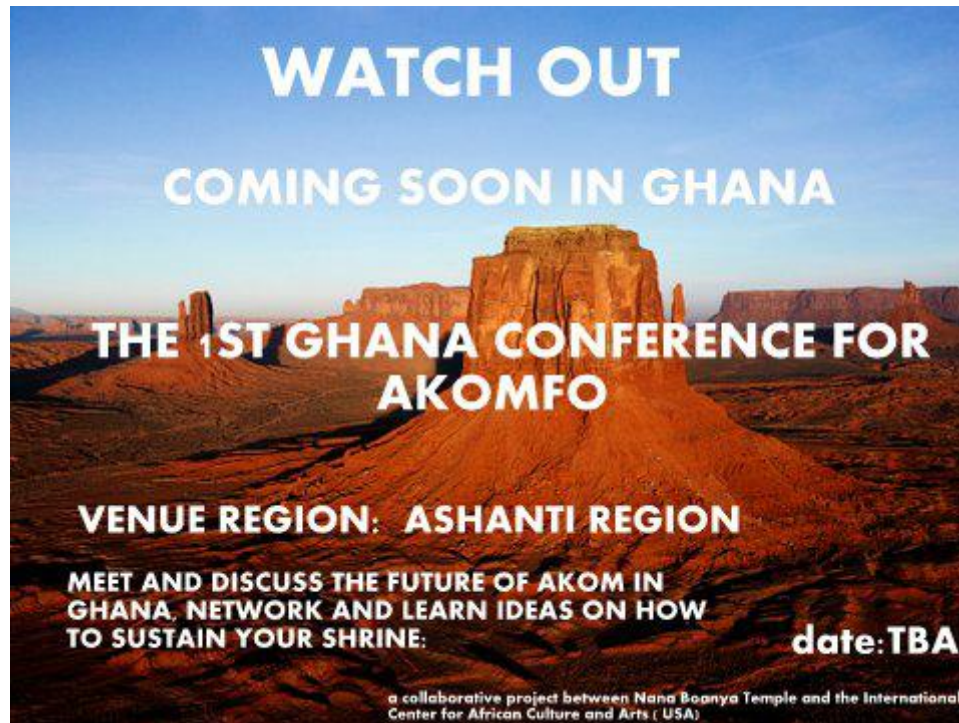
A trained and graduate Okomfo is a responsible person who is also a parent, teacher, linguist, lawyer, advocate, counselor, bread winner, family head, village leader, community role model, manager, peace maker, conflict prevention and mediation specialist as well as traditional physician with extensive knowledge of alternative healing practices and herbal medicine. An

Okomfo's role in health care delivery in Ghana and as a general contributor of positive progress towards poverty alleviation and improving quality of life for the people and the community therefore, cannot be underestimated.

Though the attacks on Traditional Religious Faith practice has been on for a while, an Okomfo in the olden days worked without so many challenges which are prevalent in the 21st Century world. Competition for devotees for the Traditional shrines, congregations for the church and faithfuls for the Mosques were done in a respectful diplomatic manner. No particular religious group made it a onerous duty to attack another or subject one to humiliating experience in a nation practicing democracy. Today, things have changed and the Okomfo is under attack from all angles. With the advent of private radio, TV, mass media in Ghana and modern media such as social networks, the Akomfo institution has been discriminated against, attacked verbally, emotionally and psychologically by so called men of God (Christians) who think that their primary measure of success and the import of their call is to ATTACK Nananom. For example, many christian gospel songs make derogatory attacks on Akom. Commercial Radio christian ministers constantly attack Akomfo as dirty, illiterates, evil practitioners and demon worshipers during their so called radio evangelism ministrations. All these been false allegations and accusations.

Historical records of the important role of the Okomfo as being a spiritual eye and support for the founding of many communities in Ghana and as protectors of the culture together with traditional leaders abound. With the so called civilization today which is translated via the use of the term.. "modern world"respect for the traditions and community leaders is under heavy attack. Recent events in Ghana can be cited as an example where a christian minister Owusu Bempah publicly attacked the great Asante kingdom and its leaders by making challenging and disrespectful remarks about the King of Asante.

Conversations such as the urgency for a united front is necessary for the institution since it has suffered for a long time. It is time that such conferences which is being planned to be an annual affair to take place to prepare the way for important national religious dialogue and to also have a strong active voice in national affairs.



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